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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (11/4): Palestinians not convinced of US position on settlements

Main Stories:

Al-Quds leads with news on the Palestinian Authority (PA) President's office spokesperson Nabil Abu Rudeina saying that Secretary Clinton's clarification of her earlier remarks on settlements are not enough for the PA to pursue negotiations with Israel. Abu Rudeina called on the US to force Israel to stop all settlement activity in the Palestinian territories (including natural growth), particularly in Jerusalem.

Al-Quds also front pages news on Secretary Clinton's interview with Al-Hurra TV yesterday in which she "claimed that the Arab foreign ministers understood what she meant regarding the US position on settlements," according to coverage. Al-Ayyam quotes a senior US official in Morocco noting to the press that Clinton wasn't mistaken in the statements she made in Israel regarding settlements.

Al Quds and Al Ayyam report on the PA Minister of Public Works Muhammad Shtayeh stating yesterday that President Abbas refused to take three phone calls from Special Envoy George Mitchell last week. Shtayeh noted that Abbas will not give in to any external pressure to change his position regarding settlements and reaffirmed that the PA will not resume negotiations with Israel prior to the full cessation of settlement activity.

The three dailies front page news that the United Nations General Assembly will convene today to discuss the Goldstone report and vote on sending it to the UN Security Council. The reports note that Israel has urged the international community to reject the report.

Settlers' attempt to take control of a house that belongs to a Palestinian family in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of East

Jerusalem also receives front page coverage in all the dailies. The family held off the settlers, but the Israeli police gave the family 10 days to take up the matter with the court. Reports also note that the Israeli authorities will demolish 35 Palestinians houses in East Jerusalem in the coming months due to the lack of appropriate building permits.

BLOCK QUOTES:

1) Al-Quds independent daily runs an editorial under the title "Is Washington For the Settlement Freeze or Against It?" (11/04): "During the past three days, we've heard contradictory statements from Secretary Clinton on the US position on settlements. This contradiction raises questions about the credibility of the US. In the worst case, it proves that the administration hasn't succeeded in changing the impressions that everyone held during the Bush administration that the US is completely biased toward Israel."

2) Hafeth Barghouti opines in Al-Hayat Al-Jadida official daily under the title "The Map is American Made" (11/04): "We did not design the road map, the Americans did. Its first phase includes the full cessation of settlement activity, including natural growth ... However, it seems as if Secretary Clinton has not read the road map yet. If she had read it, she would have taken another stance regarding settlements and negotiations."

RUBINSTEIN